



College Preparation Checklist for Students

Pre-High School:

- Take challenging classes in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, the arts, and a foreign language.
- Develop strong study skills.
- Start thinking about which high school classes will best prepare you for college.
- If you have an opportunity to choose among high schools or among different programs within one high school, investigate the options and determine which ones will help you do the following:
 - further your academic and career interests, and
 - open doors to many future options.
- Start saving for college if you haven't already.
- Investigate different ways to save money - buying a U.S. Savings Bond or opening a savings account in a bank, investing in mutual funds, etc.
- Find a mentor who will support your positive goals and help you with questions about plans for your future.

High School:

9TH GRADE

- Take challenging classes in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, a foreign language, government, civics, economics, and the arts.
- Get to know your career counselor or guidance counselor and other college resources available in your school.
- Talk to adults in a variety of professions to determine what they like and dislike about their jobs and what kind of education is needed for each kind of job.
- Continue to save for college.

10TH GRADE

- Take challenging courses in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, a foreign language, government, civics, economics, and the arts.
- Continue to talk to adults in a variety of professions to determine what they like and dislike about their jobs and what kind of education is needed for each kind of job.
- Become involved in school- or community-based extracurricular (before or after school) activities that interest you and enable you to explore career interests.
- Meet with your career counselor or guidance counselor to discuss colleges and their requirements.
- Continue to save for college.

11TH GRADE

- Take challenging classes in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, a foreign language, government, civics, economics, and the arts.
- Meet with your career counselor or guidance counselor to discuss colleges and their requirements.
- Continue involvement in school- or community-based extracurricular activities.
- Decide which colleges most interest you. Write these schools to request information and an application for admission. Be sure to ask about special admissions requirements, financial aid, and deadlines.
- Talk to college representatives at college fairs.

11TH GRADE CONTINUED

- Take advantage of opportunities to visit colleges and talk to students.
- Consider people to ask for recommendations - teachers, counselors, employers, etc.
- Investigate the availability of financial aid from federal, state, local, and private sources. Call the Student Aid Hotline at the U.S. Department of Education (1-800-4FED-AID) for a student guide to Federal financial aid. Talk to your guidance counselor for more information.
- Investigate the availability of scholarships provided by organizations such as corporations, labor unions, professional associations, religious organizations, and credit unions.
- If applicable, go to the library and look for directories of scholarships for women, minorities, and disabled students.
- Register for and take the ACT or any other exams required for admission to colleges you might want to attend. If you have difficulty paying any applicable registration fees, see your guidance counselor about getting a fee waiver.
- Continue to save for college.

12TH GRADE

- Take challenging classes in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, a foreign language, government, civics, economics, the arts, and advanced technologies.
- Meet with your counselor early in the year to discuss your plans.
- Complete all necessary financial aid forms. Make sure that you fill out at least one form that can be used for federal aid.
- Write colleges to request information and applications for admission. Be sure to ask about financial aid, admissions requirements, and deadlines.
- If possible, visit the colleges that most interest you.
- If necessary, register for and take the ACT or any other exams required for admission to the colleges to which you are applying. If you have difficulty paying any applicable registration fees, see your guidance counselor about getting a fee waiver.
- Prepare your application carefully. Follow the instructions, and **PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO DEADLINES!** Be sure to ask your counselor and teachers at least two weeks before your application deadlines to submit the necessary documents to colleges (your transcript, letters of recommendation, etc.).

